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Drying meat
*Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society Museum*

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A Comanche camp, about 1870
*Courtesy Bureau of American Ethnology*

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31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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*Yapai Comanche band "chief" in 1890. Sanapia's maternal grandfather.*

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma



This photograph dramatically conveys the nature of a very far-reaching influence on Sanapia's life: a liberal father who attempted to incorporate into his person visible symbols of the white-Christian culture in which he found himself enveloped and an extremely conservative and traditionally oriented mother who had nothing but disdain for the symbols and values of white society. 115 159 797 177 593

Sanapia's mother seems to have been almost fanatical in her conservatism. For example, though she knew and understood English, she would never speak it in a white man's presence, feeling that somehow this would belittle her in the 115 159 177 593

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*Sanapia's mother and father.*

31: Jones · E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma



*Black Kerchief*

Sanapia keeps most of her medicines wrapped in pieces of black material which are commercially sold as women's head scarfs. These large black squares of cloth are also used by some males as Western-style ties. When Sanapia is traveling without her medicine kit, though carrying her Medicine feather, she keeps it wrapped in a black kerchief. 756 755 278

The black kerchief, worn knotted at the throat, is a customary sign among the Comanches and neighboring tribes of a possessor of Medicine. Sanapia was instructed to always wear the black kerchief as a symbol of her powers. She does not wear this badge today for fear of ridicule. Sanapia does, however, keep a black kerchief tied to the headboard of her bed. She states that black is the color of luck and good fortune. She also adds that it indicates to ghosts that the wearer is not afraid of their powers. 756 292 [822] [795]

The black kerchief, or piece of black cloth, can be used in doctoring to cover the patient's face when he is instructed to inhale medicine smoke. Sanapia sometimes uses the black kerchief in this manner during the doctoring of ghost sickness. 756 755

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*Sanapia collecting medicines, 1967.*

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
Oklahoma



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*Sanapia preparing medicine.*

but since Sanapia almost exclusively uses only the root of the plant for medicine, this concern with flowing water seems ubiquitous on medicine-plant-collecting trips.

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Her dosages of the various botanical medicines follow the mystical number four found in the southern Plains area. The medicinal decoctions and infusions which she prepares are always given in units of four—four cupsful, four spoonsful, and so forth. Her externally applied medicines, such as salves and liniments, are administered with four movements of the hand; and when dried cedar leaves are employed to produce medicine smoke, they are deposited on the live coals in the course of four consecutive abbreviated motions of the hand.

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In the following discussions, a standardized introductory line will be used for each plant when possible. The Comanche term for the plant will be presented first, followed by Sanapia's translation of the Comanche term. The English translation of the Comanche term will be followed by the binomial classification of the plant, which in turn will be followed by the English common name.

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*ekapokowa:pi*

"red berry cedar" *Juniperus pinchotii* (red cedar; juniper)

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma



Comanches still incur ghost sickness and under conditions which they could have voluntarily avoided, conditions in which their culture assures them the ghost will be found. This strongly suggests the possibility that a Comanche may at some period in his life develop the need or desire to contract ghost sickness.

## Preliminaries to the Treatment of Ghost Sickness

When an individual has contracted ghost sickness and has decided to seek Sanapia's aid in alleviating his distress, he first commissions an intermediary to arrange the initial interview between Sanapia and himself. This step can also be taken by the spouse of a patient. Since Sanapia is an older woman, the liaison should also be an older woman. The preferred intermediary would be a woman who had grown up with Sanapia, for they would be acquainted, would be of the same age and sex, and generally would have the same background. The potential patient pays the older woman to "speak for him." The payment is usually made in money.

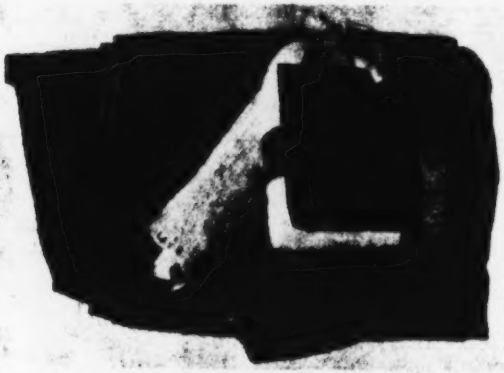
The older woman approaches Sanapia with the afflicted person's request for treatment. This meeting is very informal and does not appear to be bound with any ritual behavior. The liaison discovers if Sanapia is accessible, when she would consent to meet with the patient, what kind of payment she would require, and if there are any specific kinds of behavior which Sanapia would require of the patient. It does not follow that a woman who has known Sanapia for a number of years would be able to know the answers to these questions simply from previous experience with Sanapia. Sanapia's accessibility depends on her schedule or proposed activities, as does the time when she would meet with the patient. Although the payment of a doctor is standardized to a degree, Sanapia will perhaps broadly suggest to the liaison that there is something which she needs and which would be readily acceptable as payment. Her opinion of the required deportment of the patient may change as her moods change, or perhaps as a result of a "real dream."

The importance of the liaison is stressed by informants who have been Sanapia's patients. Sanapia does not consider the liaison necessary, though she admits that she likes to know something about the person before he approaches her as a patient. The impression received from interviews with most informants who have been Sanapia's patients was that they really did not know exactly what was demanded of them when they desired to contract the services of a Medicine woman. The liaison also functions as the advisor on the deportment demanded of the patient by a Medicine woman.

When the first interview has been arranged and the patient is preparing to visit Sanapia, he makes a point to dress humbly. No jewelry is worn. His clothing should, by its poorness, add to the pitiable and humble image he wishes to present to Sanapia. He also must follow this theme in his conversation with Sanapia. The patient must act the part of the pitiable supplicant who is throwing himself on Sanapia's mercy and good graces. This is the standard posture utilized in prayers,

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
Oklahoma





*Ritual payment: four corn shucks, Bull Durham tobacco, and green cloth.*

and in situations in which one individual must make a major request of another. By demeaning yourself to another, you are, in effect, pressuring him to acquiesce to your wishes; for by the Comanche code of generosity if he refused a request presented in such a fashion, he would indeed be a despicable person. A doctor who refused such an approach would be judged even more harshly by his community and his Medicine, for he has made an oath to uphold this code. This type of behavior on the part of the prospective patient acts as a normative pressure in the patient's attempt to contract Sanapia's services.

The formal contract occurs when the patient initiates the ritual involved with his request for Sanapia's aid. The short period of time which passes between the patient's appearance before Sanapia and the beginning of his ritual approach is described by Sanapia as follows:

> He might come here to my house, maybe somewhere else where I'm staying. "Do you know why I'm here?" I tell him, "Yeah. I guess I know why you come to see me." He be looking down at the floor and talking in a pitiful way. I just be sitting there and don't say nothing at first. I know why he's there and I just sit down and wait for him to say what he's got to say . . . just be sitting there quiet. I be watching him all the time.

The patient then produces the demanded items of payment which he has been instructed to bring by his liaison–advisor. This approach ritual payment consists of a piece of dark green cloth, a commercially obtained ⅛-ounce bag of Bull Durham tobacco, and four corn shuck cigarette "papers." The patient rolls a cigarette, takes four puffs, and hands the cigarette to Sanapia. When she takes it, the contract is made. Wallace and Hoebel state: "It is true that the Comanches

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma



595 462 went about her tasks cheerfully and willingly. Whichever one of the women divided the labor reserved enough for herself so that she was just as busy as the other women.

857 462 The little girls of the family stayed close to the women the day through, and performed tasks suitable for their ages. But the little boys roamed far and wide, never seeming to have any duties except when they were helping their father with the horses.

521 522 462 [296] [124] During group tasks there was always quite a bit of conversation and considerable laughing. In warm weather the women would go to the creek together, select a place in the shade where the water was about six or eight inches deep, and sit in the water on the sandy bottom to do the family wash. I never learned what the talk and laughter were about, as I was never able to accumulate a squaw vocabulary.

521 562 609 124 [198] (Comanche women held only the most necessary conversation with any man, Indian or white, other than their own menfolks. And while I was generally able to figure out the subject of the men's conversation and follow its progress, I seldom recognized a word used by the women when they conversed among themselves. At times I was inclined to think they even had a different language.)

595 The same air of camaraderie seemed to prevail whenever the wives were together in a group. I noticed it in the store whenever there was only one family present. Their trading done, the wives would draw 516 [352] their chairs into a group and converse. They never had chairs in their camps, but the women never passed up the several chairs we had in the store—although once in a while some quite old squaw would insist on sitting on the floor. If the chairs were all occupied, the women never hesitated to sit on the floor, and the people trading would walk around them.

595 Wherever you saw a man's wives—in town, on the reservation, or at a celebration—they always formed a group. You would not find one wife in a store and another out on the street. Two or more groups of wives would often chat together in the store or sit together in the shade on the reservation or at a powwow.

595 422 294 One custom which seemed odd to me was that of each wife's having her own sewing machine. The sewing done by the average family was not so extensive that one machine would not easily have sufficed. Yet each wife would have her own—something I had been alerted to look for by an article that had appeared in the *Star* commenting that each of Quanah Parker's wives had her individual sewing machine.